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Response Under 37 CFR 1.116
Expedited Procedure
Examining Group 2837

Claims 1-22 have been cancelled.

- 23. (Cancelled)
- 24. (Cancelled)
- 25. (Cancelled)
- 26. (Cancelled)
- 27. (Cancelled)
- 28. (Cancelled)
- 29. (Cancelled)
- 30. (Cancelled)
- 31. (Cancelled)
- 32. (Cancelled)
- 33. (Cancelled)
- 34. (Cancelled)
- 35. (Cancelled)
- 36. (Cancelled)
- 37. (Cancelled)
- 38. (Cancelled)
- 39. (Cancelled)
- 40. (Cancelled)
- 41. (Cancelled)
- 42. (Cancelled)
- 43. (Cancelled)
- 44. (Cancelled)

Schumacher (E) 1734 US - US Patent Application 10/018,979
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45. (Cancelled)

46. (Cancelled)

47. (Currently Amended) Muffler device of a motor vehicle according to claim 46,
comprising:

two mufflers, and

an actuator for changing a flow resistance of exhaust gases flowing through the mufflers
to change the damping characteristic of the muffler device,

wherein the actuator is provided in a pipe bifurcation comprising an inlet and two outlets,
each outlet being connected by a connecting pipe to one of the mufflers, and a throughflow cross
section of the inlet being variable by means of the actuator,

wherein the actuator comprises an active control element and a separate actuating
element comprising a low pressure container, a low pressure side of a diaphragm in the low
pressure container being connected via a control duct to one of a vacuum pump and an intake
pipe of the motor vehicle engine, a middle of the diaphragm being connected to the active
control element, and

wherein the an electromagnetically operable on/off valve is a 3/2-way valve is arranged
in the control duct and comprises a first connection to one of the intake pipe or [[a]] the vacuum
pump, a second connection to the low pressure side of the low pressure container, and a third
connection to the atmosphere, the first connection being connected to the second connection in a
first valve position, and the second connection being connected to the third connection in a
second valve position.

48. (Currently Amended) Muffler device of a motor vehicle according to claim 23,
comprising:

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two mufflers, and

an actuator for changing a flow resistance of exhaust gases flowing through the mufflers
to change the damping characteristic of the muffler device,

wherein the actuator is provided in a pipe bifurcation comprising an inlet and two outlets,
each outlet being connected by a connecting pipe to one of the mufflers, and a throughflow cross
section of the inlet being variable by means of the actuator, and

wherein the actuator comprises a valve plunger that is guided, sealingly and displaceably,
through a sealing plug in a partition of the pipe bifurcation between the two outlets along an
axial axis of the inlet, outward as far as a spring housing containing a spring.

49. (Cancelled)

50. (Currently Amended) Muffler device of a motor vehicle according to claim 23,
comprising:

two mufflers, and

an actuator for changing a flow resistance of exhaust gases flowing through the mufflers
to change the damping characteristic of the muffler device,

wherein the actuator is provided in a pipe bifurcation comprising an inlet and two outlets,
each outlet being connected by a connecting pipe to one of the mufflers, and a throughflow cross
section of the inlet being variable by means of the actuator, and

wherein a sealing plug is sealingly received in a hollow-cylindrical housing section of a
spring housing or of a pressure container or low pressure container, and is secured to the housing
section on ~~the~~ a partition of the pipe bifurcation.

51. (Cancelled)

52. (Cancelled)

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53. (Cancelled)

54. (Cancelled)

55. (Cancelled)

56. (Cancelled)

57. (Cancelled)

58. (Cancelled)

59. (Cancelled)

60. (Cancelled)

61. (Cancelled)

62. (Cancelled)

63. (Cancelled)

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